

Research – Development – Innovation Syllabus

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| 1. General Informations | Course title: Creative Journalism | | | | |
| | Course coordinator(s) / lecturer(s): Adam LeBor adamlebor@gmail.com Contact details: | | | | |
| | Level and Code: M-KF-E-301-A- 242502-05 | Position in the Curriculum: | Recommended semester: | Credits: 5 | Teaching hours: 48 Student workload: 102 |
| | Related codes: B-KF-401-A- 242502-05 M-KF-301-A- 242502-05 | Type: lecture/ seminar/practice /combined | Is it open to sign-up as an elective? | Specific pre-conditions to sign-up as an elective: | |
| Interlinkages / prerequisites, parallel units: | | | | | |
| 2. Targeting | <p>Aims and principles of the course: Journalism is the dissemination of news and information. Its many forms vary from terse tabloid news stories to long-form reportage and personal memoirs and essays. The fracturing media landscape has seen the decline of the traditional legacy media such as the New York Times and the BBC and the rise of sites such as Unherd and the Free Press which offer more personal essays and analyses. Yet all of these demand a similar skill set in reporting, writing and associated techniques such as research and interviewing. This course will offer an in-depth introduction to journalism and clear writing. It is suitable for anyone wanting to produce news-based content but also for those who wish to hone and sharpen their writing skills to produce high-quality essays and other content. It will be based primarily around practical exercises as well as deep reading and textual analysis that will steadily build up the participants' skill sets. The course will cover the basic skills of reporting but its overall aim is to guide the participants to produce concise well-crafted written content. This may also include essays, opinion articles or informal blog posts. While the course will also look at the changing media landscape – the rise of social media, podcasts etc – and students will be encouraged to observe and reflect on these - this is not a „media studies“ course. This course is creative and practical. Some of the material will involve exercises outside the classroom and role play – eg pretending to be a CEO or politician who will not answer questions in a difficult interview or encounter.</p> | | | | |
| | <p>Intended learning outcomes / professional and transitive competencies: Knowledge: Understanding of the basics of journalism – the ability to write and also to analyse a piece of content for informational value and literary skill. Also, the ability to assess the approach and perspective of the writer and of the media platform when considering content.</p> <p>Skills: The ability to write news stories, analysis articles, features and long-form writing. The ability to write clearly and concisely in non-journalistic content. The ability to conduct an interview, including with uncooperative or difficult subjects. The ability to develop a sharp eye for detail and understand changing and multiple environments. The ability to edit and self-edit.</p> <p>Attitudes/attributes: Students should be curious: about the world and current affairs, about international events, about their own interests and a media landscape that is changing more rapidly than at any</p> | | | | |

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| | <p>time in history. Students should be keen consumers of different types of media and ready to bring examples of those to the class.</p> <p>Students should be driven, focused and dynamic as well as always ready to question accepted wisdom and mainstream thinking.</p> <p>Autonomy and Responsibility:</p> <p>Consciously reflect on their work as it develops and their skills sets evolve. Apply the new skills sets in each assignment and in each session. Students will be required to bring examples of each type of content – for example news stories, analysis articles from different media platforms – to each class.</p> |
| <p>3. Itinerary</p> | <p>Course content (topics and themes):</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Introduction to journalism – what is news? The basics of reporting – who, what, when, where, why and how. 2. Longer news stories and news features – adding value and perspective 3. Developing a reporter’s eye for detail – learning to look and listen 4. The craft of reportage – taking the reader to a place, scene-setting 5. Writing an analysis article – weighing, evaluating, concluding 6. Essential interviewing skills – planning and preparation – understanding body language and dealing with uncooperative or hostile interviewees. 7. Guest lecturer/lecturers – depending on availability – to share experiences and be interviewed 8. The first person article – memoir and experience 9. The changing media landscape – the decline of the legacy media and the rise of independent platforms such as Unherd and the Free Press. How do we write for these? 10. The craft and principles of clear writing – developing writing style, pace and rhythm. Editing and self-editing. 11. Long form writing and reportage – taking the reader to the story |
| | <p>RDI methods and tools used in the course:</p> <p>Individual assignments, deep reading, films and documentaries, course work and group work.</p> |
| | <p>Specificity of the learning process:</p> <p>Each class will be four teaching hours (160 mins). The anticipated structure will be one teaching hour of interactive lecture, meaning that questions and reflections will be encouraged. The remainder will be exercises, either single or group, or a mix. Overall, this course will be practical, highly inter-active and demand sustained engagement and participation from those attending.</p> <p>In general students should aim to post questions on the google classroom at least 24 hours before the start of the class. However if they are news-based or to do with live current events and media coverage, questions can be posted twelve hours before the start of the class, ie up to 11.00pm the previous day.</p> <p>The course tutor will share up-to-date readings and content before each session by the latest at 10.00am Wednesday morning on Google Drive (depending on news agenda/current</p> |

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| | <p>events/topicality of material). Students must read anything posted on Google Drive before the next session.</p> <p>Teaching method: Lectures, presentations, workshops, readings. Guest lectures.</p> <p>Schedule: 14.20 to 17.20 Each session will be composed of a mix of presentations, journalistic/writing exercises, individual and group work.</p> <p>Tasks and assignments (with student notional workload): The work load will be Writing Exercise One (1000-1200 words) at four weeks, Writing Exercise Two (1500-2000 words) at eight weeks and a final assignment (2500-3000 words) at the end of the course – the word count builds up as students learn to write longer content. I will comment and respond to Exercises One and Two but only the final assignment will be marked for the course grade. However Exercises One and Two are essential for course completion. There will be extensive additional reading, films and documentaries to be watched. This will depend partly on the ongoing news agenda and material brought or suggested by students.</p> <p>Learning environment: Classroom, outside exercises and MS Teams.</p> |
| 4. Evaluation | <p>Assessment:</p> <p>Assignments: Written.</p> <p>Assessment method: Assessment will be based on participation in class, evidence of curiosity and original thinking and submission of written works. Class work will be a mix of individual, pair and group work.</p> <p>Assessment criteria: Understanding the principles of journalism, applying them, creative and original thinking, analytical skills, writing ability in English.</p> <hr/> <p>Calculation of grade: (weights of the achievements, assignments; ranges of rates or points)</p> <p>On a scale of 1- 5. Class participation 40% (= max 2 points) Assessment (including evaluation of application of principles) 60% (= max 3 points)</p> <hr/> <p>Prior learning recognition (based on application):</p> <hr/> <p>Initial recommended readings: EVANS, Harold: Essential English for Journalists, Editors and Writers. London, 2000. GREEN, Lane: Writing with Style: the Economist Guide. London, 2003. ORWELL, GEORGE: Politics and the English Language. London, 1946 (available online) KANTOR, Jodi, TWOHEY, Megan: She Said: The True Story of the Weinstein Scandal. NY, 2019. WOLFE, Tom: New Journalism. London, 1975.</p> |

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| | <p>BOYNTON, Robert: The New New Journalism: Conversations with America’s best non-fiction writers on their craft. London, 2005.</p> <p>Further readings, documents, sources: (Initial list, to be expanded as course progresses)</p> <p>HUNT, Samuel: The Beef is Settled, Financial Times, August 30 2024.</p> <p>TALESE, Gay: Frank Sinatra Has a Cold, Esquire, 1965, republished May 14 2016.</p> <p>LEBOR, ADAM. The Defiant Hungarian Princess – profile of Klara Andrassy, The Telegraph, January 2025.</p> <p>LEBOR, Adam: Thirty years on: Blood and Hatred in the Balkans, The Critic, September 2021.</p> <p>LEBOR, Adam: Israel at 70: My return to a divided country, Financial Times, October 27, 2017.</p> <p>LEBOR, Adam: Goering’s List, Sunday Times, October 1998.</p> <p>Documentaries</p> <p>Wirecard and the missing €1.9bn: My story. (Financial Times, 2021)</p> <p>Skandal! Bringing Down Wirecard (Netflix, 2022)</p> <p>Monument to the Murderers 444.hu (2021)</p> <p>The Real Albert Goering (1998) Channel 4, UK (inspired by above article)</p> <p>Films:</p> <p>Spotlight (2015) Boston Globe investigation into Catholic church and child abuse</p> <p>Defence of the Realm (1986) British political conspiracy</p> <p>The Year of Living Dangerously (1982) Foreign correspondents in Indonesia.</p> <p>The Parallax View (1974) conspiracies in the US</p> <p>Shattered Glass (2003) Fake News at the New Republic</p> <p>All the President’s Men (1976) Watergate scandal</p> <p>Frost/Nixon (2008) Interviews with Nixon</p> <p>She Said (2022) Dramatisation of above book</p> |
| | <p>Additional information:</p> |
| | <p>Schedule and venue for personal consultation:</p> <p>Friday during term time 12.30pm and 2.00pm .</p> |